



Right: The Jain Tirthankar sculpture that dates back to the 15th century.

Extreme right: An excavated sculpture of a tribal *dholak* player which dates back to sometime between the 16th and 17th century.



Extreme left: The exquisitely carved 16th century sculpture, probably created during the reign of the Gond kings of Nagpur, is an enchanting remnant of an ancient culture.

Left: A masterfully sculpted 13th century image of Mahavir, excavated in Jabalpur, stands in the corridor of the main building of Nagpur Raj Bhavan.









The rich biodiversity of the Seminary Hills surrounding Raj Bhavan displays a cornucopia of flora and fauna in the region.

## FLORA AND FAUNA

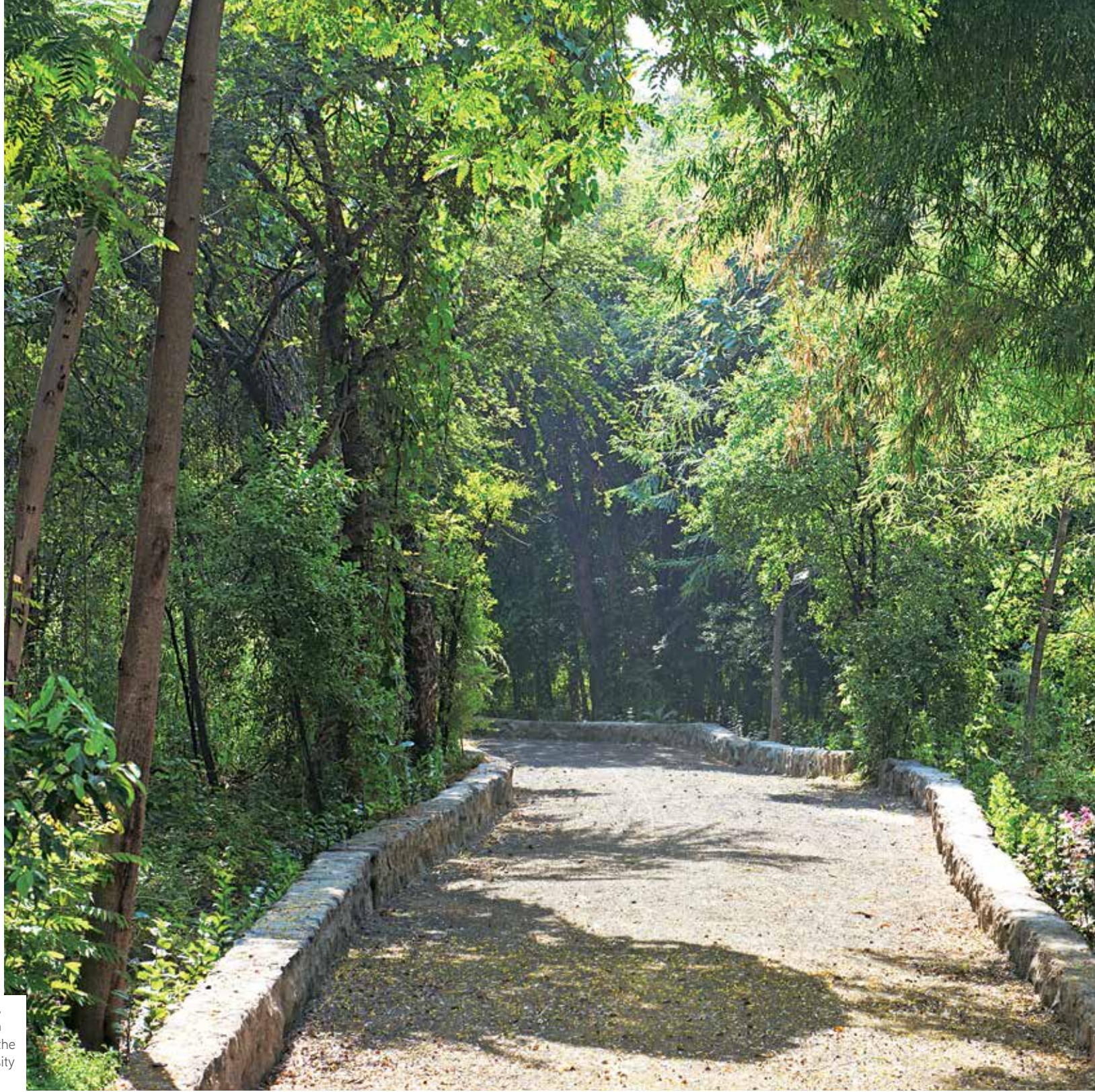


The Nagpur Raj Bhavan is located within a forested plateau in the heart of the city and is brimming with a fascinating mix of flora and fauna.

A biodiversity park was created on the huge expanse of the Nagpur Raj Bhavan in 2011, by weeding out unwanted species and planting newer ones. The flora ranges from roses, aromatic plants and medicinal plants to cacti, sacred plants, ornamental Bambusetum and a large number of native species, weaving a tapestry of dense green foliage. The fauna encompasses a large variety of butterflies and birds. A garden has been created as part of the biodiversity park to attract and retain butterflies. However, birds definitely rule the roost over here — with a staggering 139 species of them at the last count. There are nearly 50 peacocks strutting within the Raj Bhavan premises.

The following chapter takes us on a mesmerising journey of nature in the Nagpur Raj Bhavan.





A scenic, cool path through the biodiversity park.



The silk floss (*Ceiba speciosa*) stands tall amidst trimmed grass and shrubberies in one of the many gardens at Raj Bhavan.





Extreme left: The *akkalkadha* or *Spilanthes acmelta*'s flowers are a great antidote for toothache and are often used as an aphrodisiac.

Left: There are several vibrant species of flowers in the tranquil gardens of the Raj Bhavan, splashing the surrounding green forestry in a burst of glorious colour.

Right: The exquisite landscaping detail of the Raj Bhavan property is captured through colourful vegetation moulded perfectly into the shape of a butterfly.







The plants in the cactus gardens of the Raj Bhavan are elaborately arranged for aesthetic effect.



The tranquil waters of a lotus pond evoke an atmosphere of picturesque serenity in the butterfly garden.





Birds like the sleek Rufous Treepie are a common sight around the Raj Bhavan grounds.

© Ramesh Yewale



Extreme left: Seen here enjoying a midday meal, the vibrant Bee-eater from the *Meropidae* family is a voracious insectivore.

© Ramesh Yewale



Left: A lone specimen of the White-throated Kingfisher sits pensively on a tree in the biodiversity park of the Raj Bhavan.

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PUNYA BHUSHAN

GOVERNOR'S  
OFFICE





## PUNE



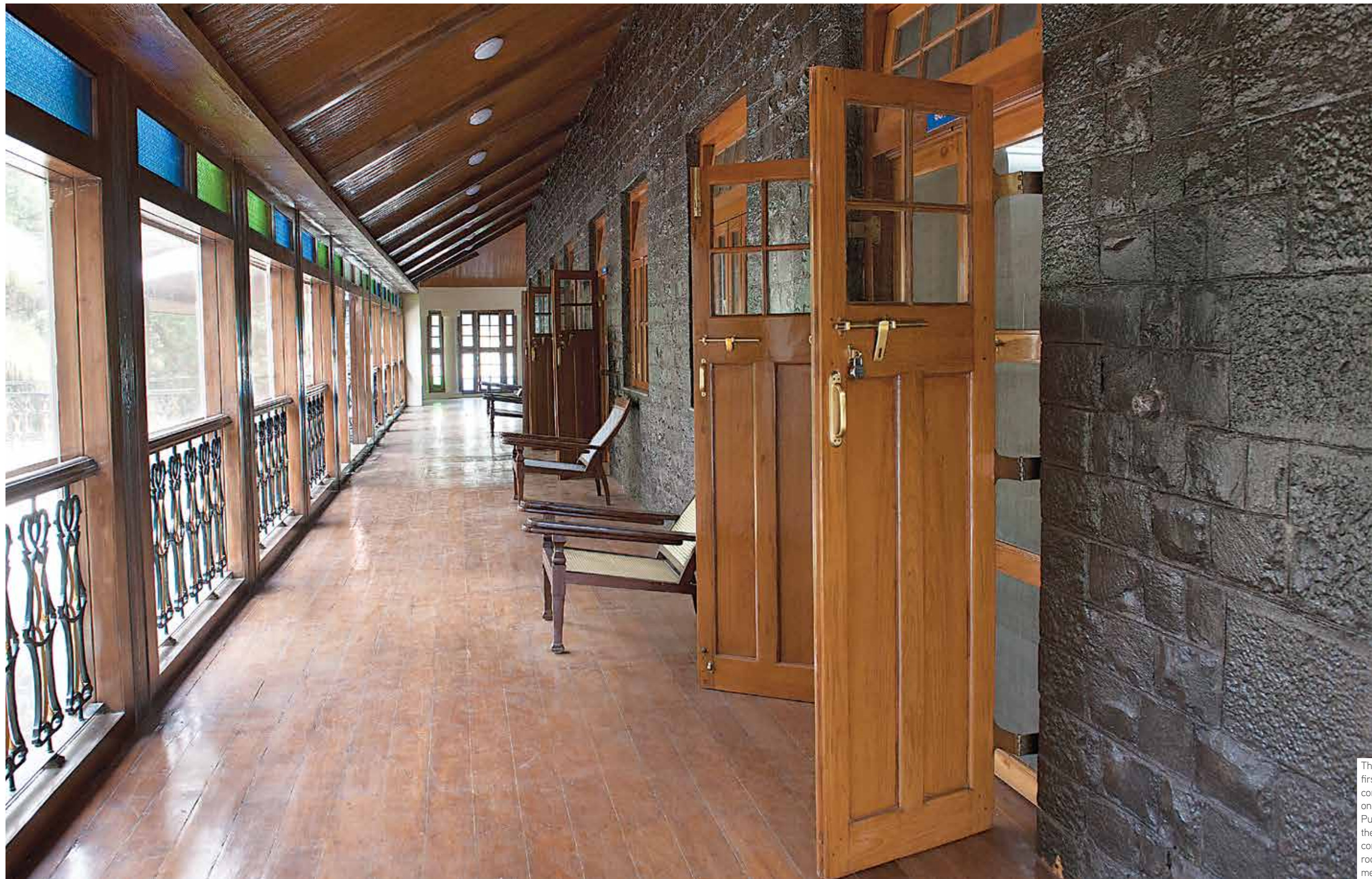
To escape the humid monsoons of Bombay as well as for political expediency, Governor Elphinstone suggested that an administrator's seat be established in Pune. Thus, the institution of a Governor's residence in Pune was set in motion. The first proper residence for the Governor of Bombay in Pune was purchased by Sir John Malcom from Major Ford C.B. amidst the greenery of Dhapoooree in 1828. But due to financial and political reasons, the estate was sold in 1864.

Almost seven years later, plans to construct a grander Government House were put in place. The chosen locale of the new structure was Ganeshkhind, which was closer to the cantonment area.

After Independence, a large part of the estate, including the Governor's office and residence, was given over to the newly formed Pune University. An existing property was refurbished to serve as the Governor's residence. Today, it is known as the Pune Raj Bhavan.

While Punya Bhushan is used as the Governor's residence, Punya Laxan serves as the presidential suite. Punya Chintan houses a small conference hall and guest rooms. A new guest house for VIPs has been constructed adjacent to the second gate of Pune Raj Bhavan.





The wooden first-floor corridor on one side of Punya Chintan, the house that comprises guest rooms and a meeting room.

# ARCHITECTURE



Originally built in 1888 to serve as a guest house, Punya Bhushan is now the Governor's official residence within the premises of Pune Raj Bhavan. With modern modifications it now comprises three bedrooms, three study rooms, a dining room, a drawing room and the Governor's office.

Punya Laxan was built in 1906, originally as a service facility for the Secretary's quarters. It has been beautifully renovated as a presidential suite for the VVIP guests of the State. Most of the original architecture has been restored in favour of modern transformations. Punya Chintan used to be known as Bodyguard House during the British rule. In present times it has been suitably restructured to serve as a guest house.





Left: The Governor's office in Punya Bhushan.

Right: The grand central drawing room within Punya Laxan, also referred to as the presidential suite.











A cast-iron cannon from the pre-Independence era stands outside Punya Bhushan.

## ART AND ARTEFACTS



*baithak* and many more.

Interesting artefacts and pieces of art can be found within the premises of the Raj Bhavan in Pune and have been well-maintained. Across the property we come across small objects that have huge significance such as the Sinhalese bell, the stone





A beautifully sculpted stone *baithek* (seat) positioned on the pathway between Punya Bhushan and Punya Laxan.



Extreme left: A Sinhalese bell with a long inscription on the upper half stands on a tripod in the garden area outside Punya Bhushan.



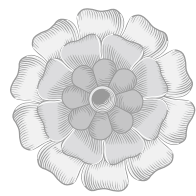
Left: A metallic sculpture of the Queen's crown from the British era.







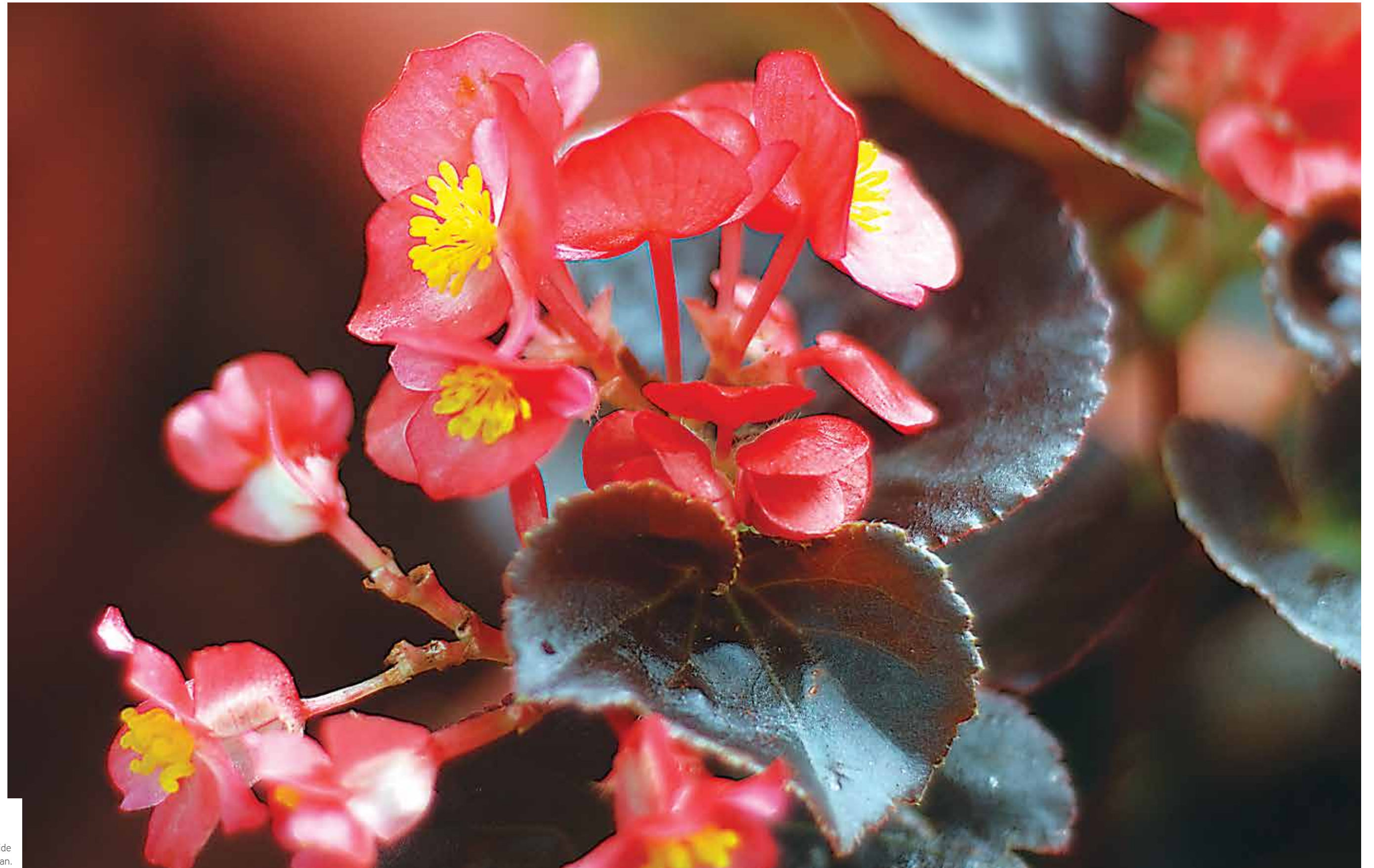
## FLORA AND FAUNA



Gardens, pathways and lawns are carefully maintained to capture the imagination and delight the senses of the visitors and the residents alike. Planned vegetation areas and artistically structured gardens lure in a variety of birds and insects too. Colourful butterflies are a common sight within the Raj Bhavan premises.

The following chapter provides glimpses of nature within the Pune Raj Bhavan complex.

A red pearl  
in full bloom  
within the  
garden outside  
Punya Chintan.







Left: Varieties of roses beautify the dedicated Rose Garden within the Raj Bhavan premises.

Right: The rare pentas flowers are a sight to behold.

Extreme right: Wild flowers, such as the cock's comb, are a common sight in the well-kept gardens of Pune Raj Bhavan.

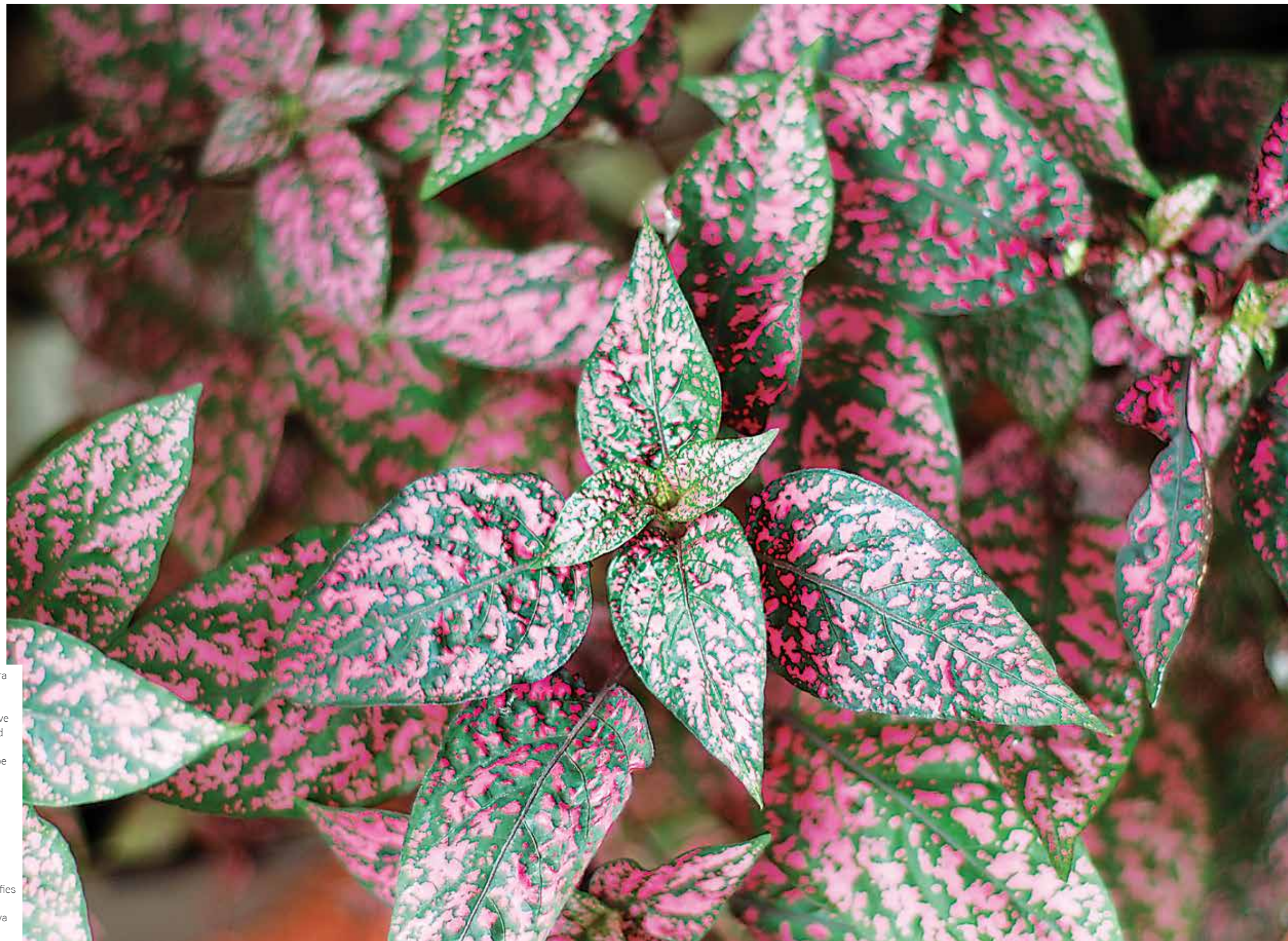






Left: The flora within the Raj Bhavan premises have been planned such that there is scope for all types of flowers, including carnations.

Right: A Chinese evergreen shrub beautifies the garden outside Puna Laxan.











# MAHABALESHWAR



Distinguished by the tranquil beauty of the countryside, the Governor's House at Mahabaleshwar, earlier known as The Terraces and rechristened as Giri Darshan, is a relatively small building nestled in the midst of a forest. It is an ideal set-up to enjoy the beauty of the Sahyadri Hills. The Terraces was purchased in 1884. Lying snug in the heart of the Sahyadri Hills, this property is divided into two houses: Giri Darshan, the Governor's personal residence and Giri Laxan, where the guests of the Governor are lodged.

The picturesque region of Mahabaleshwar had always been a source of great attraction to the Imperial Rule. It was no surprise when, back in 1826, the need for a respite from Bombay's humid climate combined with a natural love for the countryside drew Governor Mountstuart Elphinstone's attention to the cool comforts of Mahabaleshwar as a possible location for a new Government House. Over the years, however, the distance from Bombay and a number of other parameters resulted in the reconsideration of the property at Mahabaleshwar as a summer residence for the Governor.

It is remarkable to note that the tradition of more than a century ago still stands strong in this day and age. Today, the Raj Bhavan property continues to serve as a getaway for the Governor of Maharashtra, who resides in Mahabaleshwar for a few days during summer when he attends public functions and pays visits to neighbouring regions to monitor the progress of various development projects.



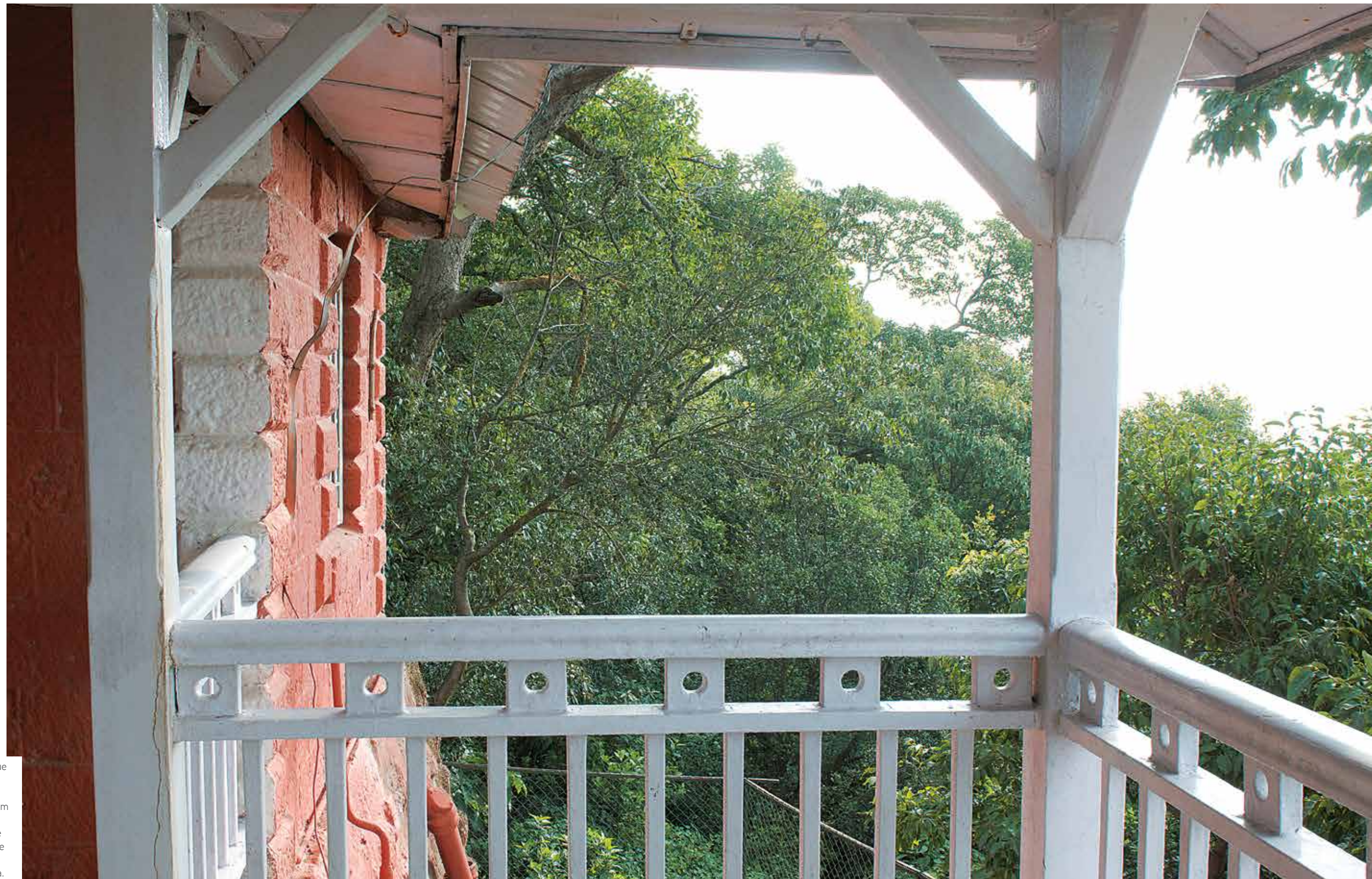
## ARCHITECTURE



Scenic Mahabaleshwar has been the favoured site for numerous buildings designated to be summer residences of the Governor of Bombay. Of these, the house and grounds of what was formerly known as Bella Vista, purchased by the Government of Bombay in 1878, was the first.

The present Raj Bhavan establishment consists of two main houses, surrounded by service quarters, coach houses and stables. Both houses evoke a classic colonial look and feel, reminiscent of their predominantly British heritage.

A picturesque view of the surrounding greenery from the balcony of one of the houses in the Governor's summer villa.







Left: Framed by the countryside scenery of Mahabaleshwar stands Giri Laxan, which serves as the perfect getaway for the guests of the Governor during hot summers.

Right: The cobbled stone pathway leading out of Giri Laxan, flanked on either side by lush plant foliage, provides a glimpse into the simple yet striking architecture of colonial times.

Extreme right: The Darbar Hall is a separate structure from the other residences, with a winding lane of steps leading towards Giri Darshan.











The Governor's summer villa in Mahabaleshwar is home to a vast and widespread range of flora and fauna.

## FLORA AND FAUNA

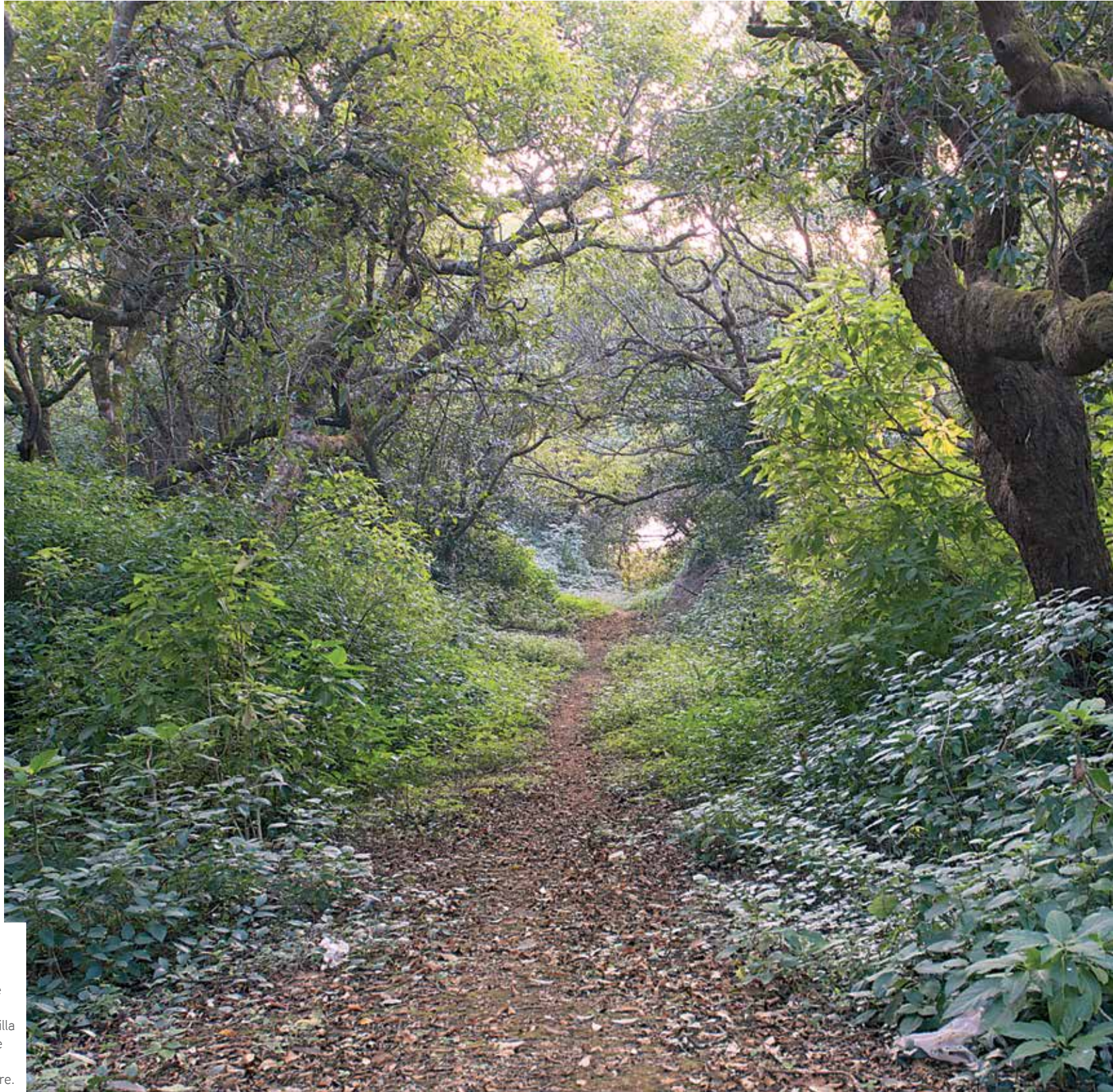


Home to one of the few remaining evergreen forests of the world, the lush green foliage of Mahabaleshwar is teeming with a rich variety of flora and fauna. The Raj Bhavan property consequently abounds with a vast range of commercial and medicinal herbs, wildlife, fruit and vegetable plantations and more.

The plant and animal life in the neighbouring forest of the Governor's summer residence in Mahabaleshwar is a magnificent spectacle of nature. The diversity of wildlife in the region is staggering. The surrounding greenery is lush with plantations of strawberries, raspberries, red potatoes, French beans, carrots and several varieties of fruits and vegetables.

The following chapter takes us into the heart of the environment of the Governor's Mahabaleshwar residence to discover a veritable treasure trove of biodiversity hidden within.





A scenic pathway through the dense foliage near the Governor's villa serves as the perfect trail through nature.



The residences are sprinkled with countless wild species of plants, earning Mahabaleshwar its rightful identity as a hub of biodiversity.









## LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS

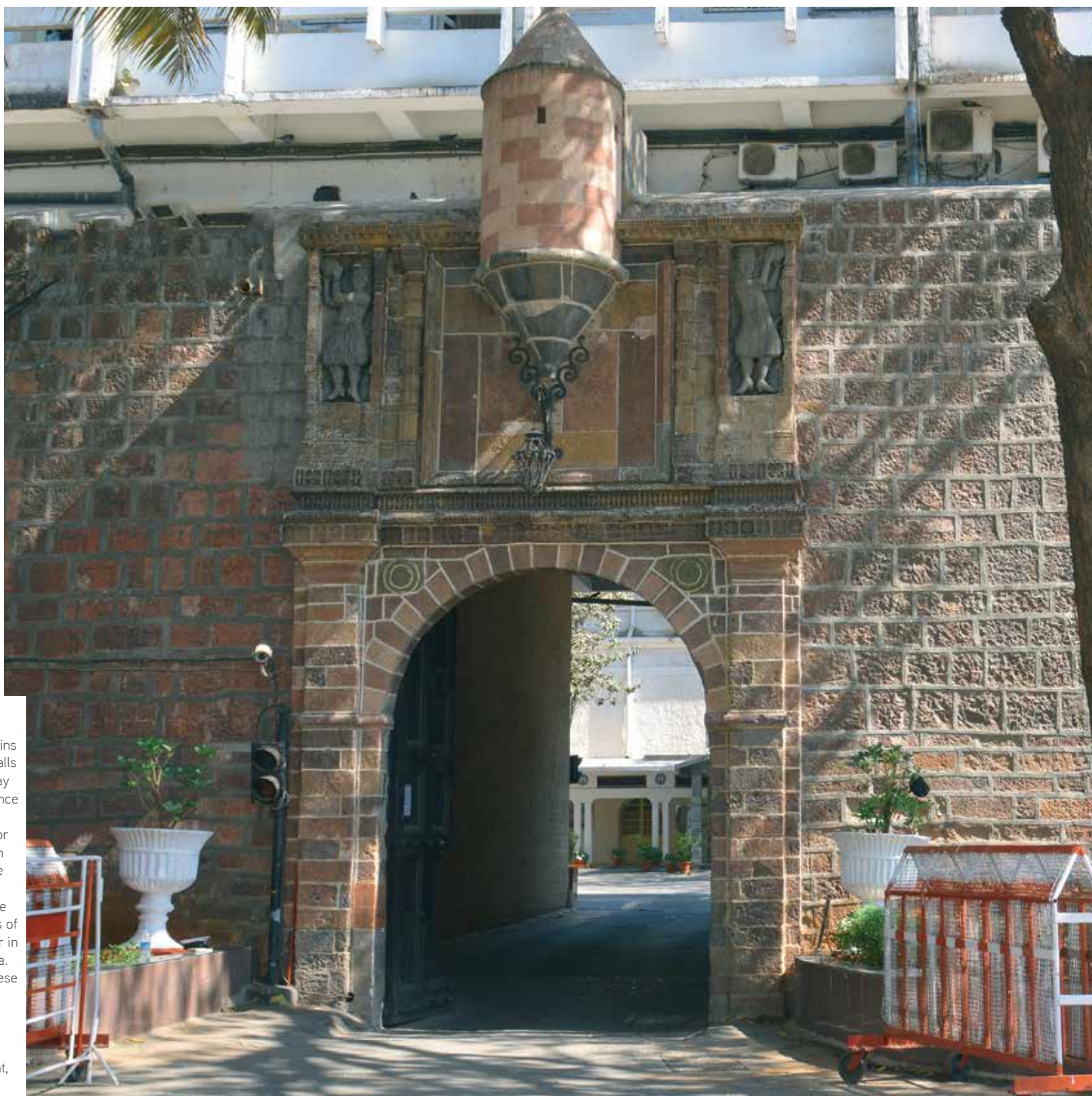


The Raj Bhavans of Maharashtra have some very interesting and intriguing features that are seldom heard about. This chapter offers glimpses of the old Government Houses and other little-known facts about the institution of the Raj Bhavan of Maharashtra.

The Devi Temple in Raj Bhavan is dedicated to a goddess who is referred to by various names — Sri Gundi, *Sagar Mata* (Mother of the Sea), and *Sakalaai Devi* (Mother of all).



The history of the Raj Bhavans begins within the walls of the Bombay Castle that once housed the famous Manor House, which served as the political and administrative headquarters of British power in Western India. The Portuguese Gate of the castle is now a part of the Naval establishment, INS Angre.



RAJ BHAVANS OF MAHARASHTRA  
*Witness to Glory*



Now known as the Haffkine Institute, this site was once the celebrated Parel House, an important link in the chain of Government Houses.

RAJ BHAVANS OF MAHARASHTRA  
*Witness to Glory*





The pet cemetery was built as a memorial to the pets of the Governors who have lived within in the Raj Bhavan.



Tucked away in the biodiversity park of the Raj Bhavan in Nagpur is a small outhouse that serves as the Information Centre for the park.





The All Saints' Church in Khadki, Pune still holds pews marked with brass plaques reserving them for the Governor of Maharashtra and the General Officer in Command. The pews also have slots to rest rifles.



The Government House at Ganeshkhind in Pune used to be the Governor's residence during the pre-Independence era. Post Independence, it was handed over to the University of Pune as their headquarters.







## EVENTS AND MEMORABLE VISITS



The halls and lawns of the Raj Bhavans of Maharashtra have had the honour of hosting a number of dignitaries. Within the four walls of the *bhavans*, several important decisions have been made and some hearty laughs shared by figures who have contributed to history.

The following chapter is a collection of a few memorable moments in the history of Maharashtra, glimpses of the 'At Home' reception hosted by the Governor and protocol practices observed in respect of the Governor.

The then Prime Minister of India, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, unveiling the neon map of Maharashtra on the momentous occasion of the formation of the State of Maharashtra along with the first Chief Minister of the State, Yashwantrao B. Chavan and Governor Sri Prakasa (left) on May 1, 1960.

© DGIPR, Maharashtra







Above: President emeritus, Smt. Pratibha Patil hosted a high tea at the Mumbai Raj Bhavan to honour the Indian Cricket Team a day after it won the ICC World Cup in 2011.

© Arun Kulkarni

Right: The ceremonial lowering of the National Flag at Raj Bhavan, which takes place at sunset every evening.

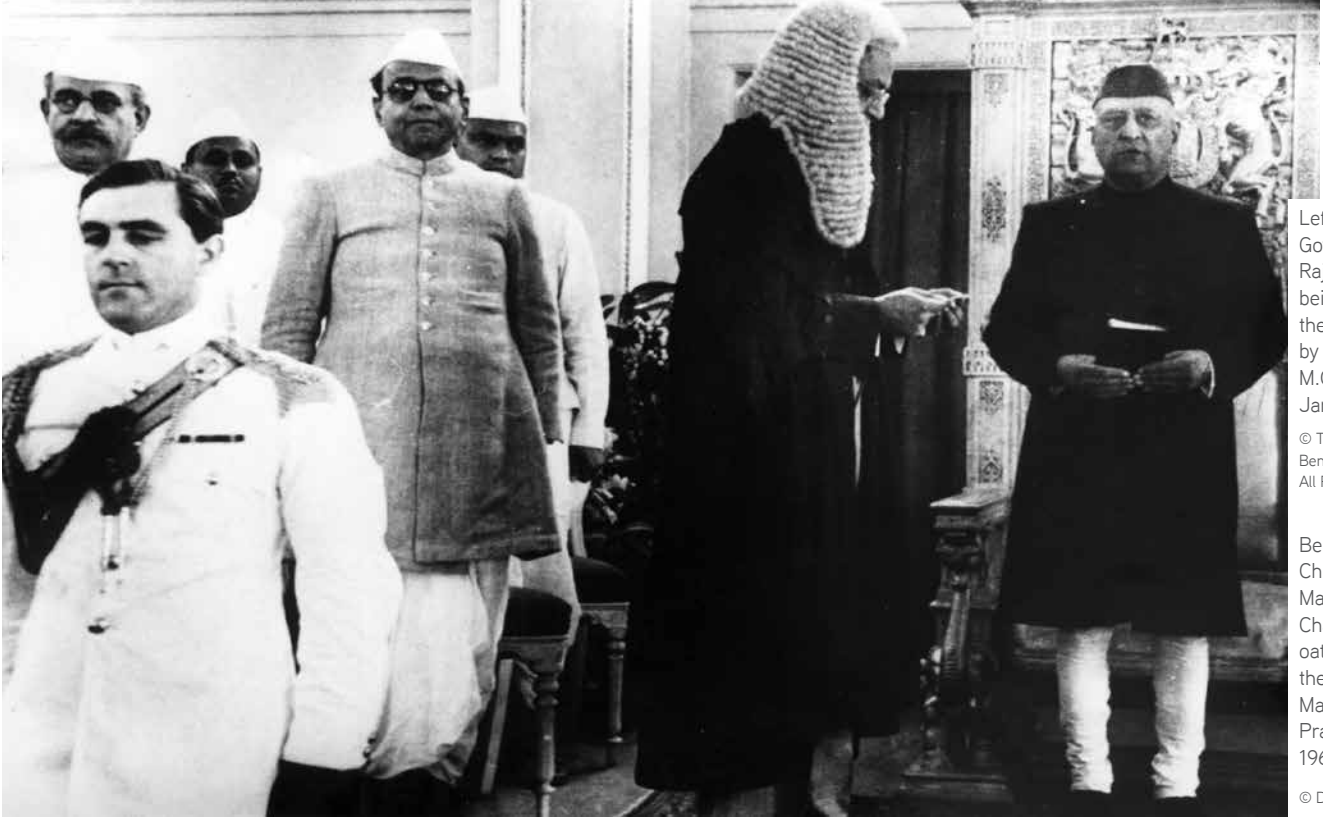


Left: Governor Sankaranarayanan leads dignitaries into the Republic Day 'At Home' reception with his wife Radha and Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan.

Below: Prithviraj Chavan entertaining the State's guests on Republic Day.







Left: The first Indian Governor of Bombay, Raja Maharaj Singh, being administered the Oath of Office by the Hon'ble Shri M.C. Chagla, C.J. on January 6, 1948.

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Below: The first Chief Minister of Maharashtra YB Chavan taking oath from the then Governor of Maharashtra, Sri Prakasa on May 1, 1960 at Sachivalaya.

© DGIPR, Maharashtra



Right and above: Governor Sankaranarayanan accepting the guard of honour on his arrival at the Nagpur Raj Bhavan.

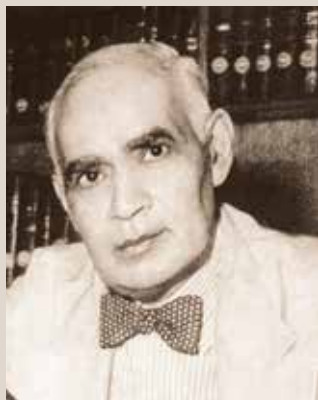




THE GOVERNORS' GALLERY



Raja Maharaj Singh  
[Jan 6, 1948 – May 29, 1952]



Shri Girija Shankar Bajpai  
[May 30, 1952 – Dec 5, 1954]



Dr. Harekrishna Mahtab  
[Mar 2, 1955 – Oct 14, 1956]



Air Chief Marshal I.H. Latif,  
PVSM (Retd.)  
[Mar 6, 1982 – Apr 16, 1985]



Shri Kona Prabhakar Rao  
[May 31, 1985 – Apr 2, 1986]



Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma  
[Apr 3, 1986 – Sep 2, 1987]



Shri Sri Prakasa  
[Dec 10, 1956 – Apr 16, 1962]



Dr. P. Subbarayan  
[Apr 17, 1962 – Oct 6, 1962]



Smt. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit  
[Nov 28, 1962 – Oct 18, 1964]



Dr. P.V. Cherian  
[Nov 14, 1964 – Nov 8, 1969]



Shri K. Brahmananda Reddy  
[Feb 20, 1988 – Jan 18, 1990]



Shri C. Subramaniam  
[Feb 15, 1990 – Jan 9, 1993]



Dr. P.C. Alexander  
[Jan 12, 1993 – Jul 13, 2002]



Shri Mohd. Fazal  
[Oct 10, 2002 – Dec 5, 2004]



Nawab Ali Yavar Jung  
[Feb 26, 1970 – Dec 11, 1976]



Shri Sadiq Ali  
[Apr 30, 1977 – Nov 2, 1980]



Air Chief Marshal O.P. Mehra,  
PVSM (Retd.)  
[Nov 3, 1980 – Mar 5, 1982]



Shri S.M. Krishna  
[Dec 6, 2004 – Mar 8, 2008]



Shri S.C. Jamir  
[Jul 19, 2008 – Jan 21, 2010]



Shri K. Sankaranarayanan  
[Jan 22, 2010 – present]



“... amongst the most charming spots, however, is the bold promontory, known as Malabar Point, and crowned with a mansion, originally the residence of Sir John Malcolm, now set apart for the accommodation of the Governor, when the heat becomes oppressive at Parell. This agreeable resort pitched upon the tall and rocky headland, like an eyrie above the waves commands a varied and extensive view, lovely at all times, but more particularly so when the sun’s broad golden disc is half obscured below the azure waters, and the feathery tips of the coconut woods retain their amber-tinted hues ...”

– *Description of Raj Bhavan by a 19th Century traveler, Mrs. Postans.*

“Maharashtra Raj Bhavan is one of the most beautiful Raj Bhavans in India. You can see the sunrise; you can see the sunset. It is spectacular. And then it’s covered from three sides by the sea.”

–*S.M. Krishna,*  
*Governor of Maharashtra (2004-2008)*



RAJ BHAVANS OF MAHARASHTRA  
**WITNESS TO GLORY**

